

Message Text

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13

ACTION SCSE-00

INFO OCT-01 EUR-06 ISO-00 EA-07 SCA-01 /015 W

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P 261036Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0064

UNCLAS MADRID 6051

SCS AND EUR/IB

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC, SP (GATCH, COL. THOMAS)

SUBJ: W/W MISSING BALLOONIST COL. THOMAS GATCH

REF: (A) STATE 17840 (B) MADRID 5210

1. EMBASSY FINALLY ABLE REACH MILITARY JUDGE CONCERNED
RE UNIDENTIFIED REMAINS RECOVERED BY KOREAN VESSEL IN
AREA CANARY ISLANDS MARCH 19, 1974.

2. WITH REGARD QUESTIONS POSED REFERENCE (B) AUTHORITY
STATED DESCRIPTION OF REMAINS ACCURATE TO BEST ABILITY
OF COMPETENT MEDICAL AND CIVIL AUTHORITIES IN LAS PALMAS
WHO EXAMINED THEM AT TIME. HE STATED EXHUMATION AND
EXAMINATION REMAINS POSSIBLE IF SPECIAL REQUEST MADE BY
EMBASSY, ADDING THAT COMPETENT AUTHORITY AVAILABLE LAS
PALMAS TO MAKE CONCLUSIVE DETERMINATION RE IDENTIFICATION
IN SUCH CASES. JUDGE SUGGESTED, HOWEVER, THAT IN EVENT
GATCH FAMILY WISHES PURSUE MATTER, THAT DENTAL CHARTS,
X-RAYS, AND ANY OTHER PERTINENT MEDICAL RECORDS WHICH
MIGHT SERVE IDENTIFY COL. GATCH BE FORWARDED LAS
PALMAS NAVAL COURT FOR USE IN PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION
(PRESUMABLY TO BE COMPARED WITH MEDICAL AND OTHER REPORTS
DESCRIBING REMAINS NOW IN COURT) PRIOR ANY REQUEST MADE
FOR EXHUMATION.

3. CONCERNING DELAY IN REPORT RECOVERY REMAINS, JUDGE
STATED THAT AS THEY WERE RECOVERED BY FOREIGN FLAG SHIP
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THERE WAS CONFLICT OVER JURISDICTION. HE COULD NOT FULLY

ACCOUNT FOR LONG DELAY INVOLVED, BUT OFFERED THAT
JURISDICTION FIRST GIVEN SPANISH CIVIL COURT AND FINALLY
ASSIGNED TO SPANISH NAVY. LATTER AUTHORITY NOTIFIED LAS
PALMAS CONSULAR AGENT AUGUST 12 WHO IN TURN REPORTED
MATTER TO EMBASSY.

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